

Silver Diamine Fluoride: Frequently Asked Questions

What is Silver Diamine Fluoride?

Silver diamine fluoride (SDF) is a liquid medication used to treat teeth with cavities. SDF treatment is quick, painless and performed by a dental provider.

What are the benefits of receiving SDF treatment?

SDF immediately hardens cavities and stops them from getting worse. During SDF treatment, liquid is placed onto the cavity using a small brush. SDF treatment may prevent the need for more invasive treatments (such as fillings, crowns and pulling out teeth). It is also a good option for children who have limited access to dental care or trouble tolerating dental treatment. There is no injection or drilling required.

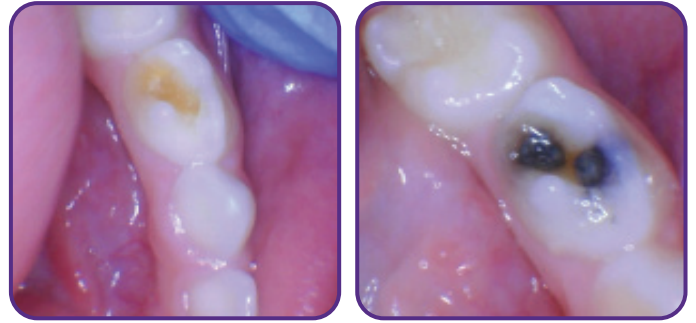
Is SDF treatment safe?

Yes, SDF treatment is safe and does not have any known harmful effects. SDF should not be used on people who are allergic to silver, or have sores or cuts in their mouth.

What are the side effects of receiving SDF treatment?

SDF treatment can stain cavities. Cavities are often soft and brown in color. SDF treatment hardens the cavities and turns the area black (which shows that the SDF is working). Stains can be covered over with a tooth-colored filling in the future.

Healthy areas of the tooth will not change color. Rarely, SDF that drips onto the skin or gums may cause a small, temporary stain that lasts a few days.



Before (left photo) and after (right photo) treatment with SDF.

Can I eat or drink after SDF is applied?

Yes, SDF sets in about one minute after it has been applied. You can eat shortly after.

Is SDF treatment right for my child?

Teeth treated with SDF should be regularly checked by a dentist. While SDF treatment can temporarily stop cavities from getting bigger, it does not repair holes that cavities made in the teeth. Some teeth treated with SDF may need a filling or a crown as a permanent solution. SDF may also need to be reapplied at future dental visits.

SDF treatment will not prevent new cavities from forming. Cavities will continue to develop if a patient does not change their habits. It is recommended that patients brush their teeth twice daily, avoid sugary foods and drinks, and visit the dentist regularly.

Is SDF treatment covered by dental insurance?

Medicaid in New York State covers SDF treatment. Call **311** for more information about how to sign up for public health insurance or to find a low-cost dental provider near you.

For more information about oral health, visit nyc.gov/health/teeth.